

Press Office

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Press Release

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**HOMELAND SECURITY CITIZEN CORPS FORMS PARTNERSHIPS WITH
THE AMERICAN LEGION AND AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**
Secretary Ridge signs affiliation agreements

WASHINGTON - Secretary Tom Ridge today announced a new affiliation between Citizen Corps and The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary to help raise public awareness about the importance of emergency preparedness and volunteer service. Along with Secretary Ridge, Thomas P. Cadmus, National Commander of The American Legion, and Sandi Dutton, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, were present to sign the respective agreements.

"The American Legion and the Legion's Auxiliary devote countless hours to serving their country and their communities," said Ridge. "With the help of these two organizations, the Department of Homeland Security's Citizen Corps will expand its efforts to educate, train and prepare all Americans."

Through these partnerships, American Legion Posts and American Legion Auxiliary Units across the nation will assist in developing local Citizen Corps Councils to involve citizens in preparedness efforts. This affiliation will also focus on engaging America's youth in hometown security, elevating Flag Day as a day of citizenship and emergency preparedness, and providing support to Veteran's Affairs Hospitals in emergency preparedness efforts.

At their 2004 National Convention, The American Legion passed a resolution to become an affiliate of Citizen Corps. National Commander Cadmus pledged the continuing commitment of his organization stating, "Supporting the Department's efforts to engage citizens in hometown security is a natural fit for The American Legion. Our members have all seen active military duty defending our country and strongly believe in the mission to be prepared on the home front too." Echoing this sentiment, Sandi Dutton, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, also expressed her support. "The women of the Auxiliary are committed to improving the welfare of the community by helping all citizens be prepared for any emergency."

Citizen Corps is the Department of Homeland Security's nationwide grass-roots effort that actively involves Americans in making communities safer, stronger and better prepared for all emergencies. The American Legion serves as an advocate for American veterans, a friend of the U.S. military, a sponsor of community-based programs for young people, and a spokesman for patriotic values. With 2.7 million members and nearly 15,000 posts worldwide, the American Legion is the nation's largest veterans group. The American Legion Auxiliary is the largest patriotic women's service organization in the world, with nearly 1 million members. The organization sponsors volunteer programs on the national and local levels, focusing on three major areas: veterans, young people and the community.

For more information about Citizen Corps, visit www.citizencorps.gov <<http://www.citizencorps.gov>>. To learn more about the American Legion, please visit www.legion.org <<http://www.legion.org>>. For more information about the American Legion Auxiliary, visit www.legion-aux.org <<http://www.legion-aux.org>>.